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Funds will help rehab Rice homes

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The South Central Kansas Economic Development District (SCKEDD) has received grant funds to benefit 10 Rice County homes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development.

The agency will use the \$37,735 to assist low/very low income families for repair and rehabilitation of their homes within the county.

USDA Rural Development Director Chuck Banks presented a check to Wilma Serpan of Raymond and David O'Dell, president of SCKEDD Thursday afternoon at Serpan's home.

She is the first recipient of funds from the Home Preservation Grant (HPG) program, which is given to non-profit organization to assist in the repair and/or rehabilitation of single-family and rental residents located in rural commu-



Wilma Serpan of Raymond speaks outside her home Thursday afternoon with Chuck Banks, state director of USDA Rural Development, prior to the presentation of the check that will help her and nine other applicants make needed improvements to their homes. (Photo by Crystal Hoffman)

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nities with a maximum population of 20,000.

"USDA's HPG program will allow SCKEDD to perform a major repair on a house, in Serpan's case the roof, and then proceed with weatherization," said Michael West, SCKEDD weatherization manger. "Since weatherization can't pay for a new roof, once that work is done, Mrs. Serpan can benefit from insulation and furnace repairs or replacement. The two programs are a good fit."

The Kansas Weatherization Assistance Program will provide \$32,150 grant funds to be combined

with the USDA Rural Development funds.

Nine more homes will be accepted for the program. Those interested in filling out applications may call SCKEDD at 1-800-658-1742 for an application packet.

Perspective applicants will fill out information to include income level, ownership of the home and the needs of their home.